

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 1284

By Bone

A RESOLUTION to honor and commend Representative Eugene E. "Gene" Davidson on his meritorious service as a member of the General Assembly.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this Body should recognize those fellow legislators who have performed their duties with remarkable dexterity and unprecedented devotion and whose efforts to excel have brought substantial benefits to their respective communities and to this great State; and

WHEREAS, Representative Gene Davidson is one such distinguished public servant whose professionalism and proficiency will serve as a benchmark for future public officials; his illustrious career in the House of Representatives, which began in 1974, will come to an end at the adjournment sine die of the 104th General Assembly, as he has announced his retirement from this august Body; and

WHEREAS, Representative Davidson has for many years been a prominent and highly influential figure in the political, social, and civic lives of the 66th House District and his native Robertson County, and he has served his constituents in numerous capacities, always working diligently at his elected duties and expending the necessary effort to understand the opposing sides of complex issues; and

WHEREAS, in November of 1974, the good people of House District 66 in Robertson County evinced their great faith in the political and governmental capabilities of Gene Davidson by electing him as their representative to the House of Representatives, a position in which he has performed admirably; and

WHEREAS, during his sixteen terms and thirty-two years in the House of Representatives (89th through 104th General Assemblies), he has been prominent as a dedicated and well-informed legislator who always votes his conscience; and

WHEREAS, in addition to being a highly respected education expert and farmer, Representative Davidson is a dynamic and aggressive participant in the legislative process and has earned the respect and admiration of his colleagues for the outstanding contributions he has made as Chairman of the House Agriculture Committee (103rd and 104th General Assemblies) and Chairman of the House Education Committee (95th through 101st General Assemblies); and

WHEREAS, he also serves as a member of the House Finance, Ways, and Means Committee, the House Calendar and Rules Committee, and the Joint Select Committee on Education, which he co-chaired from 1987 through 2000; and

WHEREAS, having been named Outstanding Educator of Robertson County in 1972 and 1974, Representative Davidson was well acquainted with all aspects of quality education upon his arrival on Capitol Hill; and

WHEREAS, during his fourteen years as Chairman of the House Education Committee, Gene Davidson provided astute leadership to Tennessee in formulating and shaping educational policy, working with purpose and conviction to improve our primary, secondary, and higher education systems; he was instrumental in the development and passage of the Basic Education Program in 1992; and

WHEREAS, he was a Delegate to the Appalachian Education Laboratory from 1987 to 1993, a member of the Governor's Task Force on Teaching in 1995, and in that same year, was the Legislative Advisory Committee Chairman for the Southern Regional Education Board, a body on which he has served with distinction since 1987; and

WHEREAS, a tireless public servant, he served as a Delegate to the 1976 Democratic National Convention; and

WHEREAS, prior to his meritorious tenure as Chairman of the House Agriculture Committee, Gene Davidson was a valuable component of Democratic leadership in the House of Representatives, serving as Majority Whip during the 89th General Assembly, Assistant Majority Leader of the 90th through 93rd General Assemblies, and Majority Leader of the 102nd General Assembly; and

WHEREAS, the extensive knowledge of agriculture that he has evidenced as Chairman of the House Agriculture Committee is not merely academic in nature, as he has farmed and raised cattle his entire life; and

WHEREAS, in fact, Gene Davidson and his family have been farming in Adams, Tennessee, since the late 1700's; their family farming operation extends across seven generations of Middle Tennesseans; and

WHEREAS, from the small family farm of the 1700's, their agricultural business has flowered into a corporate operation consisting of three partners, Gene Davidson and Fletcher Davidson, who are cousins, of Davidson Farms and Joe Seely of Davidson-Seely Farms; and

WHEREAS, Davidson-Seely Farms' land is leased across several counties in Tennessee and three counties in Kentucky; their agricultural operation consists of approximately 20,000 acres of row crops, including tobacco, wheat, corn, and soybeans; and

WHEREAS, amongst these crops, 500 head of cattle roam over his lush rolling lands in Robertson County; and

WHEREAS, Chairman Davidson is also a partner in DSF, Inc., which operates two grain elevators, located in Allensville, Kentucky, and Sadlersville, Tennessee, respectively; and

WHEREAS, he is an active and passionate participant in the historical re-enactment at Mansker's Station in Goodlettsville, an authentic recreation of a 1770 frontier fortified station typical of Kasper Mansker's first fort; and

WHEREAS, he proudly wears authentic American Revolution-era style of clothing when participating in re-enactments, with which he has been involved since 1988; he is not affiliated with any particular group, but rather participates in re-enactments purely for the love and spectacle of the events; and

WHEREAS, truly a Renaissance man, Gene Davidson is an accomplished musician who sings and plays both the acoustic and electric guitar; he is especially partial to playing the songbook of The Beatles, as he is a huge fan of the Fab Four; and

WHEREAS, he is also a noted historian specializing in the legend of the Bell Witch, who haunts his hometown of Adams; and

WHEREAS, a gentleman who truly appreciates the responsibilities, as well as the privileges, of leadership and citizenship, Representative Gene Davidson has generously

donated his time and energies to many community, civic, professional, and governmental organizations, including the Robertson County Laymen's Club, Adams Men's Club, Springfield Chamber of Commerce, March of Dimes, Springfield Jaycees, Tennessee Farm Bureau, Tennessee Kentucky Thresherman's Association, and the Robertson County Red Cross, which he formerly served as Chairman; and

WHEREAS, a native Tennessean born on New Year's Day, 1947, in Springfield, Representative Davidson earned his Bachelor of Science degree from Austin Peay State University and received his Doctorate of Jurisprudence from the Nashville School of Law; and

WHEREAS, his many accomplishments aside, Gene Davidson is most appreciative of the love and companionship he shares with his wife, Debbie; and

WHEREAS, he is the proud father of one son, Johnathan; and

WHEREAS, a devout Christian, Gene Davidson is an active member of the United Methodist Church, which he has served faithfully for many years; and

WHEREAS, Chairman Davidson is a gentleman whose prolific tenure on Capitol Hill will seldom be equaled and whose retirement from the General Assembly will create a void that will not be easily filled; his considerable talents and energies will be sorely missed by the good people of House District 66; and

WHEREAS, this Body finds it appropriate to bid farewell to our friend and colleague, Representative Gene Davidson; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we hereby honor Representative Eugene E. "Gene" Davidson on his meritorious service to Tennessee as a member of the General Assembly, especially during his illustrious tenures as Chairman of the House Education Committee and the House Agriculture Committee.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we commend him for his countless contributions and many good works in service of the citizens of House District 66 and Robertson County.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we extend to Gene Davidson our best wishes for much success in his future endeavors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation to Representative Gene Davidson as a token of our esteem.